

# RELIGIOUS INQUIRER.

"PROVE ALL THINGS; HOLD FAST THAT WHICH IS GOOD."—Paul.

ONE DOLLAR PER ANNUM]

PUBLISHED EVERY OTHER SATURDAY.

[PAYABLE IN ADVANCE.

VOL. IV.

HARTFORD, CONN. DEC. 4, 1824.

NO. 2.

## RELIGIOUS INQUIRER.

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY

J. T. BEEBE,

A FEW RODS SOUTH OF THE LITTLE BRIDGE.

REV. JOHN BISBE, JR.—EDITOR.

## POLEMICAL.

FOR THE RELIGIOUS INQUIRER.

TO JOHN V. N. YATES, Esq. Secretary of State,  
Albany, (N. Y.)

*Much respected Sir,*—Your favor of the 9th ult. was duly received. Be assured, its contents shall receive proper attention, from the *petitio principii* to the *non sequatur*. However, as it is sufficiently seasoned with the *Attic*, to remain for a time in a state of preservation, I shall now more particularly request your attention to the *previous question*.

The first idea of a written correspondence with you, was suggested by a short conversation in the Mayor's Court Room. The substance of your remarks, on that occasion, are reducible to two propositions; 1st. The infinity of sin; 2d. The Deity of Christ.

In my communication to you of July 9, 1822, some attention was paid to a number of *infinities*, found in modern systems, which I presume are neither consonant with scripture, nor sound reason; but which are absolutely necessary for the maintenance of opinions termed orthodox. The result of my labors went to prove, that neither of these infinities is supported in the scriptures of truth.

In your response, no attention was paid to my arguments on this subject, nor to the proofs adduced in their support from the scriptures. Wishing to accommodate you in the choice of a subject, I endeavored to follow you in my rejoinder, (published in a late *Inquirer*.) and in the fulfillment of this desire, followed your example in the use of the *petitio principii*, or taking for granted that which requires proof, of which I shall speak more fully at some future opportunity. As your reply to my rejoinder does not evince a wish to attend to any given point, I have taken the liberty to call your undivided attention to the first proposition, which you have assumed; viz. that sin is an infinite evil.

To this proposition I oppose the most unqualified negative. If the affirmative of the proposition be true, the proof must be found in the scriptures; but the scriptures do not contain it; the proposition is therefore false. The

proof of this declaration is all which can be required to demonstrate the negative of your proposition; and I am peculiarly fortunate in having an opponent, who is too well versed in the law of evidence, to require a train of reasoning in support of a self-evident proposition, which I propose to state as the foundation of the present discussion; viz.

*No testimony can prove both the affirmative and negative of the same proposition..* *Enco*—The Bible proves the negative of your proposition; the affirmative is therefore untrue:

*Proof.*—When Moses requested to see the glory of the Lord, Jehovah signified that he should be gratified, by seeing all his goodness pass before him. "And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, the LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, long suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin." If sin were in its nature infinite, no argument can be required to prove, that it is so of necessity, and therefore it must remain. The converse of this statement utterly destroys your proposition, and the infinity of sin vanishes in a moment. If sin be forgiven, where is its infinity?

The Lord, speaking by Isaiah, says, "Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she hath received of the LORD's hand DOUBLE for all her sins."

Here is a case in point. Jerusalem is spoken of as so much worse than Sodom and Gomorrah, that they by way of contrast, are termed *righteous*. Yet, even Jerusalem is represented as undergoing the sufferings consequent on transgression, and finally receiving comfort. And in Lam. iv. 6, her punishment is represented as *greater* than that of Sodom! If the sin of Sodom were *infinite*, how shall we graduate the scale for Jerusalem? Isaiah, after setting the sins of the Jews in this order, thus caps the climax of their disobedience—"thou hast made me to serve with thy sins, thou hast wearied me with thine iniquities. I, even I, am he that **BLOTTETH OUT** thy transgressions," ch. xliii. I wish now to inquire how infinity can be blotted out? and then I would like to be informed of the difference between infinite and finite. These are few of the many testimonies found in the old Testament in direct opposition to the proposition under consideration. We will now glance at the new Testament doctrine relative to the subject. John, speaking of Christ, says "Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world." This appears to be a sweeping clause, and answers to the prophecy of Daniel,

relative to the Saviour, that he should "finish transgression, and make an end of sin." Paul also speaks thus—"where sin abounded, grace did *much more* abound."

In Paul's epistle to the Romans, we learn that "the wages of sin is death;" and yet John the Revelator speaks of a time when there shall be *no more death*, neither sorrow nor crying, and that tears shall be wiped from all faces.

Admit for a moment that your proposition is correct, and what absurdities follow in its train! Infinite sin can be forgiven, blotted out, be less extensive than grace, and finally come to an end. Sin is never represented as the object of God's complacency, but the reverse. It is the malady of the soul, from which the good physician came to save us, for the language of scripture is, "he shall save his people from their sins." You admit that *some* of the human race will be purified from the defilement of transgression, and enjoy consequent felicity. I presume that you will not deny that if this be in any instance effected, it is through the goodness of God. It is not, however, material to the argument *how* this is effected. If it be matter of fact that any means are efficacious for the destruction of sin, and sin be infinite, a power *more than infinite* must be employed. The argument of Christ is certainly applicable to this point. The strong man armed keepeth his goods in peace until a *stronger* than he proves conqueror, and then he will spoil his goods. I am aware that it will be conceded that Jehovah *can* destroy sin as perfectly in every intelligent being as in one. True, and therefore the whole argument is conceded. For almighty power is *no more than infinite*, and that which is overcome must be *less than infinite*. Perhaps it will be said, (and indeed the proposition under investigation shows that it is said) that God's design does not extend to the extirpation of all sin. This is using the *petitio principii* in good earnest, and that without a particle of testimony in its favour. Let us look at the testimony of the apostle on this behalf. "For as much then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he [Christ] also himself likewise took part of the same, that through death, he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil." Again—"For this purpose was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." These two passages sweep, as with the besom of destruction, both cause and consequence into the gulf of oblivion.

The devil is represented as the cause of sin, of [moral] death. When these are annihilated, "there shall be no more death." Then, and not sooner, will be heard the shout of triumph—"O death! where is thy sting? [sin] O grave! [hell] where is thy victory?"

But I must not forget that your multifarious concerns as a public officer claim your constant attention, and that brevity is not always the least valued point in a discussion. If we cannot often say of any given subject—*veni, vidi, vici*, we may endeavor to bear in mind that *multum in parvo* is a motto worthy our remembrance. In close of the subject I wish to signify, that if the testimonies quoted, and the arguments deduced therefrom, are worthy attention, you will

be pleased to state the impressions left on your mind. If neither the declarations of scripture, nor the deductions of reason warrant the dogma of infinite sin, it is our bounden duty to reject it. If, on the contrary, both scripture and reason favor your proposition, you will confer a favor by furnishing me with new light on this important subject.

I await your answer with respectful, but anxious solicitude. In my next, your second proposition will probably be examined.

Most respectfully yours,

MAYHEW.

## DOCTRINAL.

FOR THE RELIGIOUS INQUIRER.

### QUERIES

*Arising from the reading of Heb. x. 26, 27, 28, 29.*

"For if we sin wilfully, after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy, under two or three witnesses; Of how much sorer punishment suppose ye shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the spirit of grace."

1. Must not he who died without mercy, under the law, have died in a perfectly impenitent state? This question must be answered in the affirmative.

2. Is not every person who dies in an impenitent state consigned to never ending torment in the eternal world? The believer in the doctrine of endless misery must answer this question in the affirmative. There is nothing on which he lays greater stress, or speaks with greater confidence, than the endless misery of all who die impenitent. Therefore—

3. How could he who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, &c., suffer a sorer punishment than he who despised Moses' law and died without mercy? Can there be a sorer punishment than endless misery? There must be, if the doctrine of endless misery be true. If the man who died without mercy under the law, died impenitent, (which none can deny) and if, dying impenitent, he must according to the doctrine, suffer endless misery, then the man who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, &c., seeing that he must suffer a sorer punishment than the other, must suffer something worse than endless misery—or the common doctrine, which teaches that all who die impenitent suffer endless misery, is certainly untrue! But such is the power of tradition, bigotry and superstition, that thousands will believe the doctrine of endless misery to be true, after it is clearly proved to be false. When such persons shall have come to the knowledge of the fact, that the doctrine of endless misery is not true, and when they shall feel their utter inability to oppose this fact, with argument and divine testimony, then—

4. Will they not be very likely, out of spite, to say, we will go on and sin as much as we please; we will take our fill in sensual gratifications; we will practise every kind of wickedness and abomination; for, if endless misery be not true, it matters not how badly we conduct? This will undoubtedly be the case, if we may place any reliance on the declarations of such persons.

5. Will not the person, who thus wilfully sins, merely because he cannot have his own wild and heterogenous notions of an endless state of misery true, be likely to have a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation? Undoubtedly he will, if the author of our text entertained just ideas of the subject; for he says, If we sin wilfully, after &c., there remaineth no more sacrifice [remedy] for sins, but [there remaineth] a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation.

6. Will this fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation be experienced in this world? If so, then the punishment of sinning wilfully, after we have received the knowledge of the truth, is inflicted in this world. If not, then the punishment of this sin will not be experienced in this, but in the other world; for this fearful looking for of judgment, &c., is evidently the punishment, the sorer punishment of sinning wilfully.

7. What then is the fact on this subject? Do people experience a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, in this world, or not? It is the fact that they do experience it in this world. Almost all christendom is now tormented, "day and night," with a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation; and this is discovered in almost all their conversation, preaching and writing.

8. Is it not then certain, that almost all christendom is guilty of sinning wilfully, after having come to the knowledge of him who is the way, and the truth, in obstinately denying him to be the Saviour of the world; in pleading for the endless misery of a part of the world, and in spitefully rejecting the evidence of their error?

9. Does not Christ, the Saviour, say, come unto me and I will give you rest? And must not a person be far from Christ to be deprived of rest, "day and night," and to have, instead of rest, a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation? and since almost all christendom has "no rest day nor night," but is troubled with a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, to come in eternity, where no judgment and fiery indignation are said in the scriptures to come, is it not certain that almost all christendom has departed from Christ? Is it not certain that they are turned away from the truth, and are turned unto fables? Let the advocate of endless misery deny, if he can, that he is now experiencing that infallible evidence of wilful sin, a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation. He cannot deny this; and if he would consider, he could not avoid seeing that it proceeds wholly from his obstinate adherence to error. No such fearful looking for of judgment & fiery indignation

ever was produced by the truth; for the truth is Christ, in whom there are peace and rest. But the stickler for endless misery may retort, by saying, it is obvious that some have not this fearful looking for of judgment, and yet are strangers to the truth. I grant it. There are some, and by no means a few, who are perfectly dead in trespasses and sins. These have no fears of the kind, for they have no moral sensibility. But there are others, whom the gospel has awakened from death, not like the Jews, to contradict and blaspheme, and then to judge themselves unworthy of everlasting life; but to believe, and to enter into rest.—These have no fears of that terrible judgment and fiery indignation, which are so much harped about, and so much experienced in a fearful looking for them. It is not those who are dead and insensible; it is not those who believe and obey the truth; but those who have heard, but will neither believe nor obey, who are punished with this fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation. This is the class, and this only, that is damned and tormented. "Those who sin, without law, perish without law;" which is far "better than having known the way of righteousness to turn from the holy commandment" unto fables. "The grace of God, which bringeth salvation, teaches to deny ungodliness and worldly lust;" but the lying doctrine of endless misery teaches to sin wilfully, in order to prove that sin is not punished sufficiently in this world. The sequel shows how sadly it deceives its votary. It shows that when it cried peace, peace, no good came!

J. B.

FOR THE RELIGIOUS INQUIRER.

### CHARITY.

Since the first promulgation of christianity, a want of charity has been the predominant failing of its professed believers, but on no people in the world is the exercise of this virtue so incumbent, and in none is the omission so inexcusable. It is not a little surprising, that the followers of one who inculcated unlimited charity, and who gave such bright examples of it in his life and death, should be so destitute of this virtue. If christians would meditate more on the conduct of their Master, who, when he was reviled, reviled not again, we should not see them engaged in persecuting their brethren, who conscientiously differ from them in their faith, but whose practice is worthy of their imitation. Let no one deceive himself, by imagining that he is loving and serving God, while he is hating and persecuting the children whom he made, and for whom he gave his only begotten and well beloved Son to suffer and die, that he might reconcile them to himself, that they might be partakers of his holiness. Christians should keep in recollection, that no man loveth God and hateth his brother; for if he love not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? Also, that he that loveth not knoweth not God, for God is love. We shall not be surprised that the inspired penman enforced the exercise of charity with energy and pathos, when



we consider the want of it as the fruitful source of all the persecutions, from the crucifixion of our Saviour to the present hour.

Nothing leads more directly to uncharitableness, than a belief that our heavenly Parent loves some of his children with eternal and unchanging affection, and hates others with eternal and immutable hatred. It is natural for those who think God will pour out the vials of his wrath without mitigation or end on those he hates, to begin their imitation of him here, by tormenting those they hate; and if God treat his enemies in this way, no reason can be given why men should treat theirs in a different manner. Should any one endeavor to remonstrate, it might be replied, "I am commanded to imitate God in all his imitable perfections, may I not then torment my enemies a few days?" when he will inflict the most unimaginable torments on his through the wasteless ages of eternity. Should it be said, the scriptures command us to love our enemies, and to do good to those who hate us, it might be asked, what reason do they give for this command? the answer is contained in the same verse, "that we may be the children of our Father in heaven, who maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good;" but this answer completely destroys the idea of his inflicting eternal pain on the evil, for if he bestow good on them through *this* life, and do not in the future, he certainly changes; but the sacred oracles inform us, that he *changes not*, that he is without *variableness* or *shadow of turning*.

Let us search the scriptures diligently, and if they do not support the idea of God's inflicting endless pain on sinners, we will reject a sentiment, which is derogatory to his character, repulsive to every benevolent feeling, and which has been the cause of much bitter animosity and persecution. The idea that God has his favorites, operates the same unhappy consequences in the family of man, as Jacob's partiality produced in his, and although we reap the bitter fruits of the crimes we commit, in consequence of this error, God will doubtless overrule it for our advantage, as he did in the case of the patriarchs. If we would avoid the miseries experienced in Jacob's family, let us cherish friendship for every individual, and extend the circle of our usefulness, by the cultivation of that charity, which suffereth long, and is kind. If we pursue this course, our lives will be the best comment on our sentiments. And may that God, who is *good unto all*, and whose *tender mercies* are over *all* his works, enable us to exercise that charity, which never faileth towards those, who denounce our doctrine as immoral; and may we, under the firm conviction, that God, in his own time will open their eyes to see the truth of the sentiments they now deprecate, endeavor to live in peace with all men.

PRISCILLA.

### CONSISTENCY.

Many people are believed to be very good christians, because they are *orthodox* in faith, though they are extreme-

ly *heterodox* in practice; whereas, should they be judged by the standard Christ proposed for the decision of his character, their claim to discipleship would be speedily settled. Unless a person conduct with uprightness, it is perfectly vain that he contends for his spiritual illumination; for a good heart will produce good works; and if the deeds be evil, the state of the heart, the claim to christianity is decided. A virtuous life is the best profession of religion; and unless people exhibit this proof of sincerity, after they have publicly declared themselves the followers of Christ, they will most certainly furnish evidence for their own condemnation. The necessity therefore of proving the goodness of the faith by the purity of the life is obvious, as the character of any belief is, by the candid, invariably determined by the effects it produces.

REFLECTOR.

## RELIGIOUS INQUIRER.

SATURDAY, DEC. 4, 1824.

"Earnestly contend for the faith."

### NOTES ON THE SCRIPTURES.

Anxious to remove the scruples of any, who might not clearly understand, or fully admit our comments on Matt. xxv. in the last number, we proceed to a more particular consideration of the 46th verse of that chapter. Believing the text would be justly explained, could three questions be satisfactorily answered, we shall examine them with some particularity.

1. When were the events, mentioned in the last paragraph of this chapter, to happen?
  2. Who were set on the right and on the left hand?
  3. What are the nature and duration of the punishment?
- In reply to the first question, when were the events of the last paragraph to happen? we say, at the *coming* of the Son of man in his glory, with the holy angels. That this answer is correct, the commencement of this passage clearly shows. Could we ascertain when the Son of man was to come in his glory, with the holy angels, the question concerning time would be settled. Let us then examine the testimony. But while doing this, we must keep this fact in constant remembrance, that the events, in the last section of Matt. xxv. are to happen at the very time when Christ comes in his glory, with his holy angels. Matt. xvi. 27, 28, Jesus says, for the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his holy angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works. Verily I say unto you, there be some standing here, who shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom. Mark viii. 38; ix. 1, Christ says, whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, in *this adulterous and sinful generation*; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels. And he said unto them, verily I say unto

you, that there be some of them that stand here, who shall not taste of death, *till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power.* Luke, ix. 26, 27, Jesus says, for whosoever shall be ashamed of *me*, and of *my words*, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels. But I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here, who shall not taste of death, *till they see the kingdom of God.* These texts evidently show, that the coming of the Son of man in his glory, with the holy angels, to reward every man according to his deeds, was in the days of the generation then on earth. Although these passages are very explicit in fixing the time when the Son of man was to come, and though more quotations might seem unnecessary, for the removal of every doubt, we shall give additional testimony. Matt. x. 23, Christ, addressing his disciples, says, but when they persecute *you* in this city, flee *ye* into another; for verily I say unto *you*, *ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come.* In Matt. xxiv, from the 29th to the 35th verse, Christ gives his disciples a luminous account of his coming in the clouds of heaven, with great power and glory, and then assures them, all the things he had mentioned, should be accomplished in that generation; *verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.* It is worthy of remark, that in each representation of Christ's coming with his angels, his disciples are considered witnesses of the events that precede and accompany his advent. This circumstance not only determines that the Son of man came in the days of the generation then on earth, but that he came during the lifetime of his immediate disciples. But what seems to place our subject in a clear light is, the language with which the passage we are considering begins; *when the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory.* The texts we have cited, prove that the Son of man was to come before that generation had passed away, yes, before the apostles had gone over the cities of Israel, and that he was to come to reward every man according to his works. Having settled the time when the predictions in the 25th of Matt. were fulfilled, we shall make a few explanatory and corroborative remarks. It is noticeable, that John, who did not write his gospel till after the destruction of Jerusalem and the dispersion of the Jews; till the kingdom of God had been taken from them, and given to a nation bringing forth its fruits, makes no mention of this prophecy, as it had received its completion. Had it pertained to a day of judgment in a future world, it was as important that the Ephesians should be made acquainted with this fact, as it was, that the errors of Cerinthus and the Gnostics should be refuted. Though we find no intimation of this prophecy in John's gospel, we find an account of *false Christs* in his first Epistle, ii. 18, 19, which was written a short time before the siege and destruction of Jerusalem, to warn the christians of Judea against deception; hence we infer, that John, knowing the prediction had received its

fulfilment, and believing the Christians generally were acquainted with this fact, conceived it unnecessary to record this denunciation in his gospel. Did Christ, in the 25th of Matt. intend to give his disciples an account of a "day of dread, decision, and despair" in the coming world, and of the principle on which the award is to be made, it is astonishing that the apostles, in all their preaching, never informed the people that they could earn heaven by feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, and visiting the sick and imprisoned disciples; and that John, that loved and loving Evangelist, should leave the inhabitants of Asia Minor ignorant of this all-important fact.

That the coming of Christ was expected just before Jerusalem was destroyed, is evident from 1. Cor. x. 11, now, all these things happened unto them for ensamples; and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the *ends* of the world are come; Phil. iv. 5, let your moderation be known unto all men. *The Lord is at hand*; Heb. ix. 26, but now once, in the *end* of the world, hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself; x. 25,—37, not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another, *and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching*—for yet a *little while*, and he that shall come will come, *and will not tarry*; James v. 8, 9, be ye also patient; stablish your hearts; *for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh—behold the judge standeth at the door*; 1 Peter iv. 7, but the *end of all things is at hand*; be ye, therefore *sober*, and *watch* unto prayer; 1. John ii. 18, little children, *it is the last hour*; and as ye have heard that *antichrist* shall come, even now there are many *antichrists*; whereby we know it is the *last hour*. The fact, that the Epistles, from which these quotations are made, were written between the years 57 and 69, and that Jerusalem was destroyed in the year 70, renders our opinion consistent, by a number of plain and striking coincidences. Having seen that Christ declared he would come in his glory, with his holy angels in the generation in which he lived; and that his disciples should see him; and that they understood this coming to be at the dissolution of the Jewish state, and thus instructed their brethren, may we not safely conclude the time is rightly fixed to that generation, and that Christ verily came, according to his *own words*, when the city, temple and polity of the Jews were destroyed?

#### MR. SARINE—AGAIN.

This gentleman, after having had the offer of a Methodist Chapel, in Boston, for the delivery of his Lectures, in reply to Mr. Balfour, has been denied the use of their house by the committee, in consequence, as he says, of "a want of a little common honesty." Since that time, he has received an invitation from the Universalist Society in Charlestown, to deliver his Lectures in their house. In agreement with their request, he commenced on the second Sabbath of last month, and is to continue them on every alternate Sabbath evening, till they are concluded. A



Prospectus of their publication will be issued from the press in a few days.

It is highly gratifying to see the readiness with which the Charlestown Society has opened their house, and the anxiety they evince to hear all sides of the argument. Mr. Balfour will now have a fair opportunity of hearing what can be said against his Inquiry, and of replying, or yielding to the force of his opponent's reasoning. Whatever may be the effect on the parties directly concerned, we hope the discussion may enlighten the community in the knowledge of the scriptures. May God bless and instruct the disputants, and all sincere inquirers after truth.

### DEDICATION.

The New north Church, in this city, was dedicated, and the Rev. Carlos Wilcox ordained on Wednesday last.

### TO SUBSCRIBERS.

Our Subscribers, who have supposed the price of the paper is increased, are hereby informed of their mistake, and requested to look at the terms in the Prospectus, and on the first page of the Inquirer.

### MISCELLANEOUS.

#### CHRISTIAN LIBERALITY.

We are happy to have it in our power to present our readers with an evidence of *christian liberality* which is rarely afforded by those who differ from us in sentiment respecting the extent of Christ's salvation.—This is a case in which the minister was apprized that a member of his church had embraced the doctrine of universal salvation, and was desirous of becoming a member of the Universalist Church in this town. For this purpose she applied to the pastor of the church, who gave her, without the least apparent reluctance, and with becoming candour and cheerfulness, a fair and charitable certificate; of which the following is a correct copy:

"This may certify, that our sister, Hannah Hawkins, is a member of the Church of Christ, in Cranston, R. I. Elder Henry Tatem, pastor; and as such, we recommend her as a member in good standing, to any Christian Church, wherever her mind may be led.

HENRY TATEM, Pastor.

Cranston, March 25th, 1834."

No comment is necessary on the above certificate, for it carries its own evidence to the mind, of a heart exercised with the sublime virtue of christian CHARITY.

Christian Telescope.

#### PROPRIETY OF CONTINUING THE REFORMATION.

We have heard much of late, of New-England's forefathers. High encomiums have been justly passed upon them, in sermons preached in commemoration of their first landing in this country. Leaving their native country and friends, braving the dangers of the seas, and settling in this unknown howling wilderness, surrounded by wild beasts & savage men, supported by a principle of conscience and with a view to the glory of God; certainly entitle them to our highest commendation, as do likewise their love of order, their cheerful obedience to good laws, their genuine and warm attachment to liberty, and their great care to train up their families in the fear of God, by sanctifying the Sabbath and keeping up public worship. I must con-

less, they have been, from my earliest years, favorite heroes in my esteem; having left us an example worthy to be admired and copied after, so far as Providence calls us to it. But I never thought, that because they were Calvinists, it is incumbent upon us to be so; or that it is a crime in us to depart from their religious opinions, where we think they are not founded in the word of God. They were eminently wise and pious; but they were men, and therefore as liable to err, as all other good men are. We are commanded to call no man, nor any set of men masters upon earth.—Our great Lord and Master and his inspired apostles, are the guides we should endeavor implicitly to follow. Our business is to search the scriptures, because in them are contained the words of eternal life.—And if we use our best endeavors and prayers to understand them, and the same holy and heavenly temper prevail in us, as was in perfection in our blessed Lord, there is no doubt but we shall be accepted according to the gracious scheme of the gospel, though in some things we should err in our judgment.

The first reformers from popery never pretended to have had a new revelation from heaven. They expressly drew all their religious opinions from the word of God. And it is well known, they designed to have carried the reformation farther, when the spirit of the times would admit it. But some seem to think, it is an indispensable duty for us to remain where they left us, and that it is a crime for us to have any religious opinions different from theirs. Mr. Robinson, the excellent pastor of this venerable band, thought otherwise; as may be seen from his farewell address. Neal, in his history of New-England, page 77, observes—"All things being got ready, Mr. Robinson kept a solemn day of fasting and prayer with his congregation, and implored a blessing upon their hazardous undertaking, and preached an excellent sermon from Ezra, viii. 21st: '*I proclaimed a fast there, at the river Ahava, that we might afflict our souls before God, to seek of him a right way for us, and for our little ones, and for all our substance.*'" He concluded his discourse with the following exhortation; which, because it breathes such a noble spirit of christian liberty, as was hardly then known in the world, and may serve to give the reader a just idea of this great and good man, I shall transcribe for his perusal.

"Brethren, (says he) we are now quickly to part from one another and whether I may ever live to see your face on earth any more, the God of heaven only knows; but whether the Lord has appointed that or no, I charge you before God and his blessed angels, that you follow me no farther than you have seen me follow the Lord Jesus Christ.

"If God reveal any thing to you by any other instrument of his, be as ready to receive it as you ever were to receive any truth by my ministry; for I am verily persuaded, I am very confident, the Lord has more truth yet to break forth out of his holy word. For my part, I cannot sufficiently bewail the condition of the reformed churches, who are come to a period in religion, and will go at present no farther than the instruments of their reformation. The Lutherans can't be drawn to go beyond what Luther saw—whatever part of his will our good God has revealed to Calvin, they will rather die than embrace it. And the Calvinists, you see, stick fast where they were left by that great man of God, who yet saw not all things. This is a misery much to be lamented; for though they were burning and shining lights in their times, yet they penetrated not into the whole counsel of God; but were they now living would be as willing to embrace further light, as that which they first received.—I beseech you remember it, it is an article of your church covenant, that you be ready to receive whatever truth shall be made known to you from the written word of God. Remember that, and every other article of your sacred covenant: But I must here withal exhort you to take heed what you receive as truth—Examine it, consider it, and compare it with other scriptures of truth before you receive it; for it is not possible the chris-

tian world should come so lately out of such thick anti-christian darkness and that perfection of knowledge should break forth at once.—Having said this, with some other things relating to their private conduct, he committed them to the grace of God."

*Brattleborough paper.*

#### REMARKABLE ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE TRINITY.

In a modern periodical work, published in London, called "The Free thinking Christian's Magazine," No. 7, are found the following paragraphs under the title—

#### "DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY."

"Lightfoot, in commenting upon some portions of the Old Testament, says—"Some three months after this, the three persons of the Trinity dine with Abraham. The Son and Holy Ghost go down to Sodom, but the first person of the Trinity stayeth with Abraham."

An "Allegorical Picture of the Battle of Waterloo," by Ward, was recently exhibited in London. In the description which was sold in the exhibition room, occurred the following explanation of "The Union Jack." "Wellington has his hand on the tri-colored cross on the shield of Britannia, expressive of the Chieftain's emblem;—the three colors of which it is composed, being answerable to the three persons in the Trinity. Red is the first, or fiery principle in the Godhead. Blue, the second, is the Saviour or Mediator. White, the third, is the Dove of Peace!"

In the first of these paragraphs the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, are represented to be three as distinct beings, as three angels, or three men. In the second, the Father of mercies, the source of love and goodness, is represented as a "fiery principle in the Godhead"—indeed as an odious character when compared with the Son and Holy Spirit!

To such absurd and debasing views of the Supreme Being, chiefly, have men been led, by departing from the simple language of the gospel, and by adopting, as an article of faith, a form of words unknown to any inspired writer, and unintelligible to the human mind.

D. L.

*Christian Register.*

*From the (Boston) Universalist Magazine.*

#### CELEBRATION.

Messrs. Editors.—At the request of the Society, and agreeable to previous notice in the public prints, a number of ministering brethren assembled at Gloucester, Mass. on the 3d ult. for the purpose of attending the semi-century commemoration of the first preaching of Universal grace and salvation in that place, fifty years from that day, by the late Rev. John Murray.

This occasion awakened in many bosoms the most interesting and sacred recollections. The goodness and help of Divine Providence "in the day of small things;" the faith, patience and perseverance with which some endured trials; and the peace, joy, and triumphant hope in which many others had finished their earthly course, passed in review before us in the animated visions of remembrance, and reminded us of our sacred obligations of gratitude and faithfulness to Heaven, for the success and prosperity of that holy faith which now causes the pulsations of joy to beat high in so many hearts, in the full assurance of universal happiness, through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The public services of the morning were introduced by the reading of the second chapter of St. Paul to the Corinthians, first Epistle; and after singing, continued by an introductory address, by Br. Thomas Whittemore of Cambridgeport, on the importance of the occasion, the propriety of commemorating the joy with which the proclamation of God's universal salvation was at first received by the believing Gloucesterians; the sufferings and persecutions

through which they had contended for the faith delivered unto them; and the success which had crowned their perseverance in the doctrine of impartial grace: after which he also offered the introductory prayer.

A sermon was then delivered by Br. Paul Dean, of Boston, from the 7th chapter of the 1st of Sam. and the 12th verse. "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us." In which were noticed the good Providence and favor of God, in sending to this country, his servant, the late Rev. John Murray, to preach to its since free, independent and favoured inhabitants, the "Grace of God that bringeth salvation to all men;" and in the success which attended & favoured his personal labors—in the courage and constancy with which the early believers of this Heavenly Doctrine met, sustained and overcame the trials of excommunication, calumny and oppression, in the name, and for the sake of christian liberty—in the progress which has attended this cause in that place, and in our Commonwealth and country, notwithstanding the tide of determined opposition which set against it—and in the gift of Br. Thomas Jones, as a second gift and messenger of "good tidings from a far country," to be the Pastor and guardian of this first Universalist Church gathered in America. The mention of some of the many signs of the final and universal prevalence of this grace, the felicity which will attend its triumph, and the duty of those who are permitted to look for its coming, finished the discourse. The concluding prayer was by Br. Zelotes Fuller, of Charlton, Mass.

In the afternoon the first prayer was offered by Br. Barzillai Streeter of Troy, N. Y. and the discourse given by Br. Sebastian Streeter, of Boston, from the 1st of Cor. iii, 10, "According to the grace of God which is given unto me as a wise master-builder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon." In which it was ably and eloquently shown that Christ Jesus the Lord, as preached by the Apostles, John Murray, and others, is the sure, the only sure and precious foundation laid in Zion for the salvation of the world. He continued by describing the support and comfort which this benignant sentiment has yielded and still yields its sincere followers in the hour of affliction and death; and concluded by ingeniously setting forth and defending the mild and happy influence, which as it advances, it will exert upon the minds and hearts of men, and upon all the institutions of society. Br. Ezra Leonard, of Cape Ann, made the concluding prayer.

The evening service of said day was commenced with prayer by Br. Hubbard H. Winchester, of Wilmington, Vt. and continued by an interesting sermon from Br. Hosea Ballou 2d, of Roxbury. Text, Isaiah ix. 2, 3, 4. "For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and Kings to the brightness of thy rising. Lift up thine eyes round about, and see; all they gather themselves together, they come to thee: thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side." He contrasted the views of religion which prevailed in these parts fifty years ago, with those more rational and enlightened, which are entertained at the present day: and inferred from thence the speedy approach of that blessed day, when divine light and truth shall disperse the darkness, and fill the whole earth with the glory of the Lord, and bring all the sons and daughters of Adam to worship before him in the beauties of perfect holiness. These animating services were interspersed with excellent and appropriate music by the choir, attended by full and solemnly attentive audiences, and closed with a devout prayer by Br. Thomas G. Farnsworth, of Newton, Mass. After which, we returned to Col. Pierce's, by whose christian liberality and attention, in connexion with others, we were entertained in a most friendly manner. By ourselves and many others, we feel assured this celebration will be long remembered, and numbered among the happiest occasions of our lives. And we cherish the hope and belief that the semi-century re-



turn of this day will be celebrated with religious gratitude and joy, until Christ shall have an altar in every place, and at every altar, an herald of salvation ministering to his redeemed.

By order

PAUL DEAN.

P. S. The Editors of all Universalist periodical publications, are requested to insert the above.

P. D.

#### IMPORTANCE OF

### PIOUS MOTHERS.

You will rarely, perhaps never, see a woman to whom any idea of religion has been communicated, entirely abandon a compliance with its external duties, or insult its principles by the language of profaneness and contempt. What a public blessing, what an instrument of the most exalted good, is a virtuous Christian mother! How many, perhaps, who now hear me, feel that they owe to it all the virtue and piety that adorns them, or may recollect at this moment, some saint in heaven, that brought them into light, to labor for their happiness temporal and eternal. No one can be ignorant of the irresistible influence which such a mother possesses of forming the hearts of her children, at a season when nature takes in lesson and example at every pore. Methinks I behold her, encircled by her beloved charge, like a being more than human, to which every mind is bent and every eye directed; the eager simplicity of infancy inhaling from her lips the sacred truths of religion, in adapted phrase and familiar story; the whole rule of their moral and religious duties simplified for easier infusion. The countenance of this fond and anxious parent, all beaming with delight and love, and her eye raised occasionally to heaven in fervent supplication for a blessing upon her work. O what a glorious part does such a woman act on the great theatre of humanity, and how much is the mortal to be pitied who is not struck with the image of such excellence!

Dean Kirwan.

### ETERNAL PUNISHMENT.

The right that God hath in his creatures is founded in the benefits he hath conferred on them, and the obligation they have to him on that account. Now there's none, who because he has done a benefit, can have by virtue of that a right to a greater evil than the good he has done amounts to; and I think it next to madness to doubt whether extreme and eternal misery be not a greater evil than simple being is a good.

Tillotson's Sermons.

### MARRIED,

In this City, on the 23d ult. by the Rev. Mr. Lindsley, Mr. Jedediah Hovey to Miss Ann Bunce.

On the 24th ult. by the Rev. Mr. Bisbe, Mr. William Tibbals to Miss Laura Spencer.

By the Rev. Mr. Cushman, Mr. Luther Barber of Windsor, to Miss Margaret Giles.

At East-Hartford, by the Rev. Mr. Fairchild, Mr. Edwin P. Harrington, to Miss Electa Smith.

### DIED,

In this City, on the 19th ult. Mr. William Upson, of the house of Pelletrau & Upson, of New-York, aged 27.

In this Town, Mr. John Lord, aged 25.

At Milwood, Frederick Co. (Vir.) on the 19th Sept. Mr. Oliver Bliss, aged 31, formerly of Wilbraham, (Mass.)

At Berlin, Mr. Michael Stocking, aged 25.

At Glastenbury, on the 23d ult. Miss Laura Hollister, daughter of Capt. Roswell Hollister, aged 22.

### POETRY.



"Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord."

FOR THE RELIGIOUS INQUIRER.

### TO M. B.

How short the connexion we form,  
In a world so uncertain as this;  
How soon will eternity's storm,  
Sweep away all the phantoms of bliss.

Tho' pleasure may charm with her breath,  
And point to her magical bowers;  
Yet she hides the keen dagger of death,  
In a sheath made of blossoms and flowers.

S. H.

From the (Boston) Universalist Magazine.

"For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."—Malachi iii. 6.

Should man, at last in sorrow rise,  
When death's long sleep has fled,  
And see the planets, in the skies,  
Dissolving o'er his head:—  
Should he behold an angry God,  
Whose eyes flash endless ire,  
Beneath whose mighty iron rod,  
The crumbling worlds expire:—  
Could he believe *this* God, the same  
Who form'd the earth and sun,  
Who taught his tongue to praise his name,  
For all his hand had done?  
Could he suppose *this* wrathful power,  
E'er gave creation birth?  
Or sent a sweet refreshing show'r,  
To cool the parched earth?  
No, reason must resign her seat,  
Chill'd by his awful nod,  
While trembling nations, at his feet,  
Confess the world without a God!

HERMES.

### SLANDER.

Against slander there is no defence. Hell cannot boast so foul a fiend, nor man deplore so fell a foe: It is with a word—with a nod—with a look—with a smile: it is the pestilence walking in darkness, spreading contagion far and wide, which the most wary traveller cannot avoid.—It is the heart-searching dagger of the assassin.—It is the poisoned arrow whose wound is incurable;—It is the moral sting of the deadly adder. *Murder* is its employment—*Innocence* its prey—and *Ruin* its sport.

Just Received.—Discussion between A. Kuceland and W. L. McCalla, in boards, \$1 50.